

The Younger Set

By ROBERT W. CHAMBERS,
Author of "The Fighting Chance," Etc.

Copyright, 1907, by Robert W. Chambers

Truly enough, as he had often said, these younger ones were the charmingly wholesome and refreshing antidote to the occasional misbehavior of the mature. They were, as he also asserted, the hope and promise of the social fabric of a nation, this younger set.

Supper and then the woodland cotillion was the programme, and almost all the tables were filled before Selwyn had an opportunity to collect Nina and Austin and capture Eileen from a very rosy cheeked and indignant boy who had quite lost his head and heart and appeared to be on the verge of a head-long declaration.

"It's only Percy Draymore's kid brother," she explained, passing her arm through his with a little sigh of satisfaction. "Oh, here come Nina and Austin. How pretty the tables look all lighted up among the trees! And such an uproar!" as they came into the jolly tumult and passed in among a labyrinth of tables, greeted laughingly from every side.

Under a vigorous young oak tree thickly festooned with lanterns Austin found an unoccupied table. There were a great deal of racket and laughter from the groups surrounding them, but this seemed to be the only available spot; besides, Austin was hungry, and he said so.

Nina, with Selwyn on her left, looked around for Gerald and Lansing. When the latter came sauntering up Austin questioned him, but he replied carelessly that Gerald had gone to join some people whom he, Lansing, did not know very well.

"Why, there he is now!" exclaimed Eileen, catching sight of her brother seated among a very noisy group on the outer edge of the illuminated zone. "Who are those people, Nina? Oh, Rosamund Fane is there, too; and—"

She ceased speaking so abruptly that Selwyn turned around, and Nina bit her lip in vexation and glanced at her husband, for among the over-animated and almost boisterous group which was attracting the attention of everybody in the vicinity sat Mrs. Jack Ruthven. And Selwyn saw her.

For a moment he looked at her—looked at Gerald beside her, and Neergard on the other side, and Rosamund opposite, and at the others whom he had never before seen. Then quietly, but with heightened color, he turned his attention to the glass which the servant had just filled for him and, resting his hand on the stem, stared at the bubbles crowding upward through it to the foamy brim.

Nina and Boots had begun ostentatiously an exceedingly animated conversation, and they became almost aggressive, appealing to Austin, who sat back with a frown on his heavy face, and to Eileen, who was sipping her mineral water and staring thoughtfully at a big, round, orange tinted lantern which hung like the harvest moon behind Gerald, throwing his curly head into silhouette.

What conversation there was to carry, Boots and Nina carried. Austin silently satisfied his hunger, eating and drinking with a sullen determination to make no pretense of ignoring a situation that plainly angered him deeply. And from minute to minute he raised his head to glare across at Gerald, who evidently was unconscious of the presence of his own party.

When Nina spoke to Eileen, the girl answered briefly, but with perfect composure. Selwyn, too, added a quiet word at intervals, speaking in a voice that sounded a little tired and strained.

It was that note of fatigue in his voice which aroused Eileen to effort—the instinctive move to protect, to sustain him. Conscious of Austin's suppressed but increasing anger at her brother, amazed and distressed at what Gerald had done—for the boy's very presence there with the set of whom they disapproved was an affront to them all—she was still more sensitive to Selwyn's voice, and in her heart she responded passionately.

Nina looked up, surprised at the sudden transformation in the girl, who had turned on Boots with a sudden flow of spirits and the gayest of challenges, and their laughter and badinage became so genuine and so persistent that, combining with Nina, they fairly swept Austin from his surly abstraction into their toils, and Selwyn's subdued laugh, if forced, sounded pleasant now, and his drawn face seemed to relax a little for the time being.

Once she turned, under cover of the general conversation which she had set going, and looked straight into Selwyn's eyes, flashing to him a message of purest loyalty, and his silent gaze in response sent the color flying to her cheeks.

It was all very well for awhile, a brave, sweet effort, but ears could not remain deaf to the increasing noise and laughter, to familiar voices, half caught phrases, indiscreet even in the fragments understood. Besides, Gerald had seen them, and the boy's face had become almost ghastly.

Allice, unusually flushed, was conducting herself without restraint. Neergard's snickering laugh grew more significant and persistent. Even Rosamund spoke too loudly at moments, and once she looked around at Nina and Selwyn while her pretty, accentless laughter, rippling with its undertone of malice, became more frequent in the increasing tumult.

There was no use in making a pretense of further gaiety. Austin had begun to scowl again. Nina, with one



"Don't go. I care for you too much to ask it."

shocked glance at Allice, leaned over toward her brother:

"It is incredible!" she murmured. "She must be perfectly mad to make such an exhibition of herself. Can't anybody stop her? Can't anybody send her home?"

Austin said sullenly, but distinctly: "The thing for us to do is to get out. Nina, if you are ready—"

"But—but what about Gerald?" faltered Eileen, turning piteously to Selwyn. "We can't leave him—there!"

The man straightened up and turned his drawn face toward her:

"Do you wish me to get him?"

"Yes, you can't do that, can you?"

"Yes, I can, if you wish it. Do you think there is anything in the world I can't do, if you wish it?"

As he rose she laid her hand on his arm.

"I—I don't ask it," she began.

"You do not have to ask it," he said, with a smile almost genuine. "Austin, I'm going to get Gerald, and Nina will explain to you that he's to be left to me if any sermon is required. I'll go back with him in the motor boat. Boots, you'll drive home in my place."

As he turned, still smiling and self-possessed, Eileen whispered rapidly: "Don't go. I care for you too much to ask it."

He said under his breath, "Dearest, you cannot understand."

"Yes, I do! Don't go. Philip, don't go near her!"

"I must."

"If you do—if you go—how can you care for me as you say you do—when I ask you not to—when I cannot endure to—"

She turned swiftly and stared across at Allice, and Allice, unsteady in the flushed brilliancy of her youthful beauty, half rose in her seat and stared back.

Instinctively the young girl's hand tightened on Selwyn's arm. "She—she is beautiful," she faltered, but he turned and led her from the table, following Austin, his sister and Lansing, and she clung to him almost convulsively when he halted on the edge of the lawn.

"I must go back," he whispered: "dearest, dearest, I must."

"To Gerald or her?"

But he only muttered: "They don't know what they're doing. Let me go. Eileen—gently detaching her fingers, which left her hands lying in both of his."

She said, looking up at him: "If you go—if you go—whatever time you return—no matter what hour—knock at my door. Do you promise? I shall be awake. Do you promise?"

"Yes," he said, with a trace of impatience, the only hint of his anger at the prospect of the duty before him.

So she went away with Nina and Austin and Boots, and Selwyn turned back, sauntering quietly toward the table where already the occupants had apparently forgotten him and the episode in the riotous gaiety increasing with the accession of half a dozen more men.

When Selwyn approached, Neergard saw him first, stared at him and snickered, but he greeted everybody with smiling composure, nodding to those he knew, a trifle more formally to Mrs. Ruthven, and, coolly pulling up a chair, seated himself beside Gerald.

"Boots has driven home with the others," he said in a low voice. "I'm going back in the motor boat with you. Don't worry about Austin. Are you ready?"

The boy had evidently let the wine alone or else fright had sobered him, for he looked terribly white and tired.

"Yes," he said, "I'll go when you wish. I suppose they'll never forgive me for this. Come on."

"One moment, then," nodded Selwyn. "I want to speak to Mrs. Ruthven."

And, quietly turning to Allice and dropping his voice to a tone too low for Neergard to hear, for he was plainly attempting to listen:

"You are making a mistake. Do you understand? Whoever is your hostess, wherever you are staying, find her and go there before it is too late."

She inclined her pretty head thought-

fully, eyes on the wineglass which she was turning round and round between her slender fingers. "What do you mean by 'too late'?" she asked. "Don't you know that everything is too late for me now?"

"What do you mean, Allice?" he returned, watching her intently.

"What I say. I have not seen Jack Ruthven for two months. Do you know what that means? I have not heard from him for two months. Do you know what that means? No? Well, I'll tell you, Philip. It means that when I do hear from him it will be through his attorneys."

He turned slightly paler. "Why?"

"Divorce," she said, with a reckless little laugh, "and the end of things for me."

"On what grounds?" he demanded doggedly. "Does he threaten you?"

She made no movement or reply, reclining there, one hand on her wineglass, the smile still curving her lips. And he repeated his question in a low, distinct voice, too low for Neergard to hear, and he was still listening.

"Grounds? Oh, he thinks I've misbehaved with—never mind who. It is not true, but he cares nothing about that either. You see," and she bent nearer confidentially, with a mysterious little nod of her pretty head—"you see, Jack Ruthven is a little insane. You are surprised? Pooh! I've suspected it for months."

He stared at her. Then, "Where are you stopping?"

"Aboard the Niobrara."

"Is Mrs. Fane a guest there too?"

He spoke loud enough for Rosamund to hear, and she answered for herself, with a smile at him brimful of malice: "Delighted to have you come aboard, Captain Selwyn. Is that what you are asking permission to do?"

"Thanks," he returned dryly, and to Allice, "If you are ready, Gerald and I will take you over to the Niobrara in the motor boat."

"Oh, no, you won't!" broke in Neergard, with a sneer. "You'll mind your own business, my intrusive friend, and I'll take care of my guests without your assistance."

Selwyn appeared not to hear him. "Come on, Gerald," he said pleasantly; "Mrs. Ruthven is going over to the Niobrara."

"For God's sake," whispered Gerald white as a sheet, "don't force me into trouble with Neergard."

Selwyn turned on him an astonished gaze. "Are you afraid of that whelp?"

"Yes," muttered the boy. "I'll explain later, but don't force things now I beg you."

Mrs. Ruthven coolly leaned over and spoke to Gerald in a low voice; then to Selwyn she said, with a smile: "Rosamund and I are going to Brookminster anyway, so you and Gerald need not wait. And thank you for coming over. It was rather nice of you."

She glanced insolently at Neergard—"considering the crowd we're with. Good night, Captain Selwyn. Good night, Gerald. So very jolly to have seen you again!" And under her breath to Selwyn: "You need not worry. I am going in a moment. Goodby, and—thank you, Phil. It is good to see somebody of one's own caste again."

A few moments later Selwyn and Gerald in their oilskins were dashing eastward along the coast in the swift motor boat south of the Narrows.

The boy seemed deathly tired as they crossed the dim lawn at Silver side. Once on the veranda steps he stumbled, and Selwyn's arm sustained him, but the older man forbore to question him, and Gerald, tight lipped and haggard, offered no confidence until at the door of his bedroom he turned and laid an unsteady hand on Selwyn's shoulder and said: "I am in a very bad fix. I want to talk with you tomorrow. May I?"

"You know you may, Gerald. I am always ready to stand your friend."

At the end of the corridor Selwyn halted before Eileen's room. A high came through the transom. He waited a moment, then knocked very softly.

"Is it you?" she asked in a low voice.

"Yes. I didn't wake you, did I?"

"No. Is Gerald here?"

"Yes; in his own room. Did you wish to speak to me about anything?"

"Yes."

He heard her coming to the door. I opened a very little. "Good night," she whispered, stretching toward him her hand. "That was all I wanted—to touch you before I closed my eyes tonight."

He bent and looked at the hand lying within his own—the little hand with its fresh, fragrant palm upturned and the white fingers relaxed, drooping inward above it—at the delicate bluish vein in the smooth wrist.

Then he released the hand, untouched by his lips, and she withdrew it and closed the door, and he heard her laugh softly, and lean against it, whispering:

"Now that I am safely locked in I merely wish to say that in the old days a lady's hand was sometimes kissed. Oh, but you are too late, my poor friend! I can't come out, and I wouldn't if I could—not after what I dared to say to you."

And, too low for him to hear even the faintest breathing whisper of her voice: "Good night. I love you with all my heart, with all my heart, in my own fashion."

He had been asleep an hour, perhaps more, when something awakened him and he found himself sitting bolt upright in bed, dawn already whitening his windows.

Somebody was knocking. He swung out of bed, stepped into his bath slippers and, passing swiftly to the door, opened it. Gerald stood there, fully dressed.

"I'm going to town on the early train," began the boy. "I thought I'd

tell you."

The dawn was no paler than the boy's face, no more desolate. Trouble was his, the same old trouble that had dogged the trail of folly since time began, and Selwyn knew it and waited.

At last the boy broke out: "This is a cowardly trick, this sinking in to you with all my troubles after what you've

done for me, after the rotten way I've treated you. Philip, I can't tell you; I simply cannot. It's so contemptible, and you warned me, and I owe you already so much!"

"You owe me a little money," observed Selwyn, with a careless smile, "and you've a lifetime to pay it in. What is the trouble now? Do you need more? I haven't an awful lot, old fellow, worse luck, but what I have is at your call, as you know perfectly well. Is that all that is worrying you?"

"No, not all. I—Neergard has lent me money—done things—placed me under obligations. I liked him, you know. I trusted him. People he desired to know I made him known to. He was a—trifle peremptory at times, as though my obligations to him left me no choice but to take him to such people as he desired to meet. We—we had trouble recently."

"What sort?"

"Personal. I felt—began to feel—the pressure on me. There was at moments something almost of menace in his requests and suggestions, an importunity I did not exactly understand. And then he said something to me."

"Go on. What?"

"He'd been hinting at it before, and even when I found him jolliest and most amusing and companionable I never thought of him as a—social possibility—I mean among those who really count—like my own people."

"Yes, my boy, I see. Go on. When did he ask to be presented to your sister?"

"Who told you that?" asked the boy, with an angry flush.

"You did—almost. You were going to anyway. So that was it, was it? That was when you realized a few things—understood one or two things, was it not? And how did you reply? Arrogantly, I suppose."

"Yes."

"With—a—some little show of—a contempt?"

"Yes, I suppose so."

"Exactly. And Neergard was put out slightly?"

"Yes," said the boy, losing some of his color. "I—a moment afterward I was sorry I had spoken so plainly, but I need not have been. He was very ugly about it."

"Threats of calling loans?" asked Selwyn, smiling.

"Hints; not exactly threats. I was in a bad way too." The boy winced and swallowed hard; then, with sudden white desperation stamped on his drawn face, he added: "Oh, Philip, it—it is disgraceful enough, but how am I going to tell you the rest? How can I speak of this matter to you?"

"What matter?"

"A—about—about Mrs. Ruthven."

"What matter?" repeated Selwyn. His voice rang a little, but the color had fled from his face.

"She was—Jack Ruthven charged her with—and me—charged me with—"

"You?"

"Yes."

"Well, it was a lie, wasn't it?" Selwyn's ashy lips scarcely moved, but his

eyes were narrowing to a glimmer. "It was a lie, wasn't it?" he repeated.

"Yes, a lie. I'd say it, anyway, you understand, but it really was a lie."

Selwyn quietly leaned back in his chair. A little color returned to his cheeks.

"All right, old fellow"—his voice scarcely quivered—"all right. Go on. I know; of course, that Ruthven lied, but it was part of the story to hear you say so. Go on. What did Ruthven do?"

"There has been a separation," said the boy in a low voice. "He behaved like a dirty cad. She had no resources, no means of support." He hesitated, moistening his dry lips with his tongue. "Mrs. Ruthven has been very, very kind to me. I was—I am fond of her. Oh, I know well enough I never had any business to meet her. I behaved abominably toward you and the family. But it was done. I knew her and liked her tremendously. She was the only one who was decent to me, who tried to keep me from acting like a fool about cards."

"Did she try?"

"To be continued."

more than one.

"I remember your wife as such a dainty and pretty thing, Humly, and yet they tell me she has turned out a fine cook."

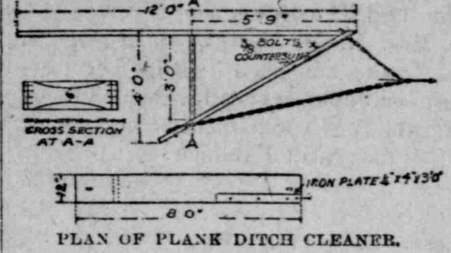
"Turned out a fine cook? She has turned out half a dozen of them within the last three months."

Let us be of good cheer, remembering that the misfortunes hardest to bear are those that never come.—Lowell.

PLANK DITCH CLEANER.

Method of Construction and How to Use It.

The ditcher or ditch cleaner is a convenient device for clearing ditches and thus keeping a road in good condition. It consists of a guide plank 2 inches by 12 inches by 12 feet and a moldboard 2 inches by 12 inches by 8 feet. These are braced with a crosspiece three feet long, as shown in the plan. The mold-



board should be shod with an iron plate one-quarter inch by 4 inches by 3 feet held in position with three-eighths inch bolts countersunk. The cross brace should be hollowed three inches on each side at the middle, the hollowing to begin not less than four inches from each end in order that its bearing against the guide and mold board planks shall not be shortened nor the nailing space decreased. This is done to prevent earth from heaping up in front of the brace. A light platform is needed to make the use of the ditcher safe.

The ditch is made as shown in the illustration of the plan, the short side of the chain being about two feet three inches in length and the long side eight feet three inches. The chain is made to pass over the moldboard, so that it may clear itself more readily. Two or three horses, according to the difficulty of the particular condition, are necessary to clear a ditch.

To secure the best service from the ditcher a weight of about 200 pounds should be placed over the front end. The essential thing to be gained is to have the ditcher maintain a smooth, even surface on the bottom of the ditch. There is then no obstruction to the flow of water. This requires that soft, muddy holes be passed over lightly and hard, high places be reduced. This result is obtained if the driver shifts his weight forward or backward as a high point or a mudhole is approached. If the driver shifts his weight forward the point of the ditcher is driven into the ground. If he moves back the pressure on the forward end is relieved, and the pull on the chain tends to raise it.

Besides clearing the ditch, the ditcher assists in preserving the slope from the side of the road to the bottom of the ditch. This keeps the road safe from possible accident to traffic from ditches with too abrupt slopes.

ROAD EXPERIMENT.

Oil Containing Asphalt to Be Used With Sand at Cape Cod.

The Massachusetts highway commission is to conduct an interesting experiment in road building on Cape Cod, where there is no stone to speak of. A heavy grade of Texas crude oil containing a large percentage of asphalt will be used with the sand. The sand road will first be shaped with a road machine, and heated oil will be spread over the surface. A second lot of oil will be sprinkled on when the first coat has been on for two weeks.

The surface will then be cut up with a disk harrow so as to mix the sand and oil to a depth of four inches. After this has been done the road will be rolled and the surface sprinkled with a thin layer of sand to absorb the surface oil. A little work of this sort was done under the highway commission's supervision about two years ago, which has resulted satisfactorily.

Importance of Good Roads.

The Gaffney (S. C.) Ledger gives the following fact and comment, which afford a practical argument on the subject of highway improvement in a nutshell:

Some Cherokee county land sold the other day at public outcry and brought from \$16 to \$37.50 per acre. This land was twelve miles from the county seat at that. If we had macadam roads this same land would have brought \$50 to \$100 per acre. Half a million dollars spent in building good roads in Cherokee would mean an increase of a million dollars in the value of our farm lands alone. Will people never awake to their own interests and begin doing something for themselves, or will they continue to abide in the mud?

Good Roads Movement Progressing.

Postoffice department officials are enthusiastic over the movement in some of the larger states of the Union for the improvement of the highways, and it is claimed that the liberal appropriations for the rural free delivery service have stimulated this movement. From information being received at the department, it is believed by the officials that highway improvement will be stimulated in all the more thickly settled states as rapidly as the rural delivery is extended, and one of the conditions for establishing a new route is that the roads must be in good condition. It is claimed also that the service is enhancing greatly the value of farm property.

Will Lay Three Grades of Gravel Roads.

In order to get the greatest possible benefits at the least possible expense gravel roads in Grand Rapids, Mich., will hereafter be divided into three classes—those designed to carry the heaviest traffic for which gravel roads are considered as suitable, those of medium traffic and the little used roads of the outlying districts. For these streets three grades of gravel will be used, varying in the percentage of stone which they carry and the care with which the material is screened.

Capital, \$100,000
Undivided Profits, \$160,000

—THE—

Winchester Bank

OF
WINCHESTER, KY.

N. H. WITHERSPOON,
PRESIDENT.

W. R. SPHAR,
CASHIER.

SOLICITS YOUR
ACCOUNTS.

HAGAN

GAS AND
GASOLINE Engines

SIMPLE! RELIABLE!
ECONOMICAL!

Sold Under a Positive Guarantee.

WRITE FOR CATALOGUE AND PRICES.

HAGAN GAS ENGINE & MFG. CO.

INCORPORATED,
WINCHESTER, KY.

"Always the same—some-
times better."

Brown-Proctoria Hotel

Woodson Moss, Manager

The best in the State for
the money.

1885—1908.

THE BEST INSURANCE IS THE CHEAPEST

If you are not insured
Find our office at once.
Write or phone for rates and terms.
Before insuring, see us. WE ARE THE BEST.

JOUETT'S INSURANCE AGENCY,

Simpson Building. Both Phones 71.

SEE
GILBERT & BOTTO

—FOR—
Fresh & Cured Meats

Fish, Vegetables, Country Produce

BOTH PHONES OPERA HOUSE BLOCK

Conkright Transfer and Ice Co.

Crating, Handling and Hauling Fur-
niture, Planos, Etc., a Specialty.

NO. 19 North Main Street. Both Phones

WINCHESTER
TAILORING COMPANY,

M. & C. H. McKINNEY, Props.

Clothes Cleaned, Pressed and Repaired.

DRY CLEANING AND